



DECSY DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION CENTRE  
SOUTH YORKSHIRE  
EDUCATION FOR A JUST AND SUSTAINABLE WORLD

# Members' Newsletter

t: 0114 241 2750 e: info@decsy.org.uk w: decsy.org.uk Winter 2015/16

## Going for Gold: Philosophy Sessions for Disadvantaged Ten Year Olds Can Boost Their Reading, Writing and Maths Results

Encouraging children as young as nine and ten to have philosophical discussions around topics like truth, fairness and knowledge can improve their progress in maths and reading by an average of two months, while the academic benefits of promoting philosophical thinking in primary school seem to be more



PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN SESSION IN ACTION

pronounced for disadvantaged pupils. This is according to the results of a new evaluation report of the enquiry-based learning approach Philosophy for Children published by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) in July 2015.

The more disadvantaged pupils participating in the EEF trial saw their reading skills improve by four months, their maths results by three months and their writing ability by two months. Feedback from teachers throughout the trial suggests that Philosophy for Children had a beneficial impact on wider outcomes such as confidence, patience and self-esteem too.

Funded by the EEF and delivered by the Society for the Advancement of Philosophical Enquiry and Reflection in Education (SAPERE), the randomised controlled trial involved 3,159 pupils across 48 schools in the UK and was independently evaluated by a team at Durham University.

At less than £30 per pupil, these results show that Philosophy for Children could be a promising and effective way for schools to

spend their pupil premium and improve outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.

A group of schools in South East Sheffield (SSELP) have begun a three-year self-funded programme, Going for Gold through SAPERE with training and support from DECSY staff Helen Griffin, Rob Unwin and Clive Belgeonne. Following initial 2-day, Level 1 Foundation training each of the schools involved will be receiving further support to develop and embed P4C across the whole curriculum eventually leading to the SAPERE Gold award. This year we are pleased to be working with Wybourn Community Primary School, Tinsley Meadows Primary, Emmaus Catholic and Church of England Voluntary Academy and High Hazels Academy (formerly Greenlands) with more schools beginning in September 2016. SAPERE can support with seeking funding for the programme in schools with disadvantaged pupils. If you are interested in exploring involvement in the Going for Gold programme then please contact Helen Griffin initially.

## Gender Respect Project

In 2013, in its Closing Doors report, the Institute of Physics looked at the 'progression from GCSE into six A-level subjects that display gender imbalance: English, mathematics, biology, physics, economics, and psychology' and found that '81% of state-funded, mixed schools were either maintaining or exacerbating the already poor gender bias of progression into these subjects. Moreover, to improve upon the ratio of 21% of girls doing physics nationally, schools needed to be reducing the imbalance in the other subjects too, providing further evidence that school culture is an important factor.'

On Tuesday 20th October 2015 the Institute of Physics published its 'Opening Doors' report co-funded by the Government Equalities Office with recommendations for changing school culture to counter gender stereotypes including:

- Identifying a 'senior gender champion'
- Staff attending gender awareness and unconscious bias training
- Sexist language being identified and prevented
- Using progression data and addressing issues identified by the data
- Developing initiatives such as visits from role models to help students challenge stereotypical views
- Ensuring subject equity and an emphasis on working hard rather than innate talent
- Giving careers guidance which actively challenges gender stereotypes
- Ensuring students are at the heart of the campaign to counter gender stereotyping
- Ensuring PSHE valued highly and sessions on equality and diversity form the basis of a wider school campaign and discussions on these themes continue through other topics

We are delighted that this guidance has been published in our final year of the Gender Respect Project as we are looking for ways to disseminate the learning and curriculum materials which can support schools in meeting many of the above objectives. Our eight project teachers (from EYFS to secondary), along with staff Helen Griffin and Clive Belgeonne will be available to run free workshops in schools or at conferences or other events over the course of this academic year. Please contact Helen Griffin if you would like to find out more.

## DECSY Members Area ([www.decsy.org.uk/members](http://www.decsy.org.uk/members))

The Members Area on the DECSY website is regularly updated with links and resources to enhance global learning teaching about current events. There is a great page of P4C stimuli, listed alphabetically, with new resources added regularly. Don't know your password to access the Members area? E-mail: [info@decsy.org.uk](mailto:info@decsy.org.uk) to request your school membership password and get using some great global learning resources.